

LandWarNet — Transforming to a Warfighter Enterprise

Jaclyn Pitts

LandWarNet is transforming to an enterprise structure that will maximize warfighter capabilities by giving Soldiers a single identity and providing access anywhere in the world, at any time. Army leaders discussed the importance of LandWarNet's transformation at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, DC, Oct. 6, 2008.

LTG Jeffrey A. Sorenson, Army CIO/G-6, listens as LTC John Kolasheski, 3rd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 3rd Infantry Division (3ID), tells him about his unit's communications operations at Patrol Base Assassin, Iraq, Jan. 19, 2008. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Emily J. Wilsoncroft.)



LTG Jeffrey A. Sorenson, Chief Information Officer (CIO)/G-6, led a panel discussion, "Transforming LandWarNet for the Warfighter," to explain how LandWarNet is evolving to deliver needed capabilities to the Soldier more effectively and efficiently. Sorenson explained that although LandWarNet exists, it does not have the capabilities needed for warfighters today, such as a single identity for the Soldier and the ability to connect to the network anywhere in the world. The transformation to an enterprise structure will provide those capabilities and others.



BG Brian Donahue, Director of LandWarNet, G-3/-5/-7, and LTG Jeffrey A. Sorenson, CIO/G-6, listen to BG Michael Basla, from the U.S. Air Force Command, Control, Communications, and Computer Systems Center, as he answers a question from the audience Oct. 6, 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Jacqueline M. Hames.)

As defined by the Army Posture Statement, LandWarNet is the Army's portion of the Global Information Grid, and it moves information through a seamless network, enabling the management and use of warfighting and business information. Because the Army is moving to a modular, expeditionary force, LandWarNet must follow suit and become more streamlined through an enterprise structure. The Army plans to achieve that goal with the use of Network Service Centers (NSCs), which federate networks and create a seamless network wherever a Soldier is. The Global Network Enterprise Construct, which will be supported by NSCs and function as the basis of the transformed LandWarNet, will optimize Soldier connectivity by providing the basics to get Soldiers connected.

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"As a CONUS-based Army, our relevance can be largely defined by our responsiveness," said BG Brian Donahue, Director of LandWarNet, G-3/-5/-7. "Our responsiveness is largely defined by our expeditionary capabilities. Our relevance to the Joint force command is going to be defined by how quickly we can get into the fight. Our expeditionary capabilities are network-dependent." LandWarNet will enable the preparation for war, the transition to war, and all phases of combat operations, increasing the speed and efficiency of Soldiers and, therefore, the Army. Having connectivity at all phases of combat operations allows Soldiers to hit the ground running and immediately engage the enemy, as well as gives Soldiers access to accurate information quickly, increasing their lethality.

Becky Harris, Global Information Grid Enterprise Services Director,

discussed DOD's net-centric enterprise services (NCES). The NCES program's goal is to deliver 11 different capabilities. "What's exciting to me about these capabilities is that they're not just for one user," Harris said. "They are a set of information-sharing capabilities, an information infrastructure to allow us to operate, collaborate, and leverage what we've all done in a much more agile and robust manner."

By employing NCES capabilities, such as user access provided through Defense Knowledge Online, content discovery, robust certificate validation, and the Joint enterprise directory service, unanticipated users may enter with a public key infrastructure certificate and conduct a query for information. Certificates are then validated and sent to the policy decision point where it is determined whether the user has the necessary attributes to execute his/her query. If all requirements are met, the query is executed and results come back. At this point, the user's attributes are again checked before the results are given to the user. "Can you just see the power of applying a few of these technologies? Capabilities open up in a secure manner from a data source that was not readily available,"

Harris said. "My message to you is the vision is becoming a reality. ... We are starting to build the foundation to realize this vision."

BG(P) Susan S. Lawrence, U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM)/9th Signal Command (Army) Commanding General, discussed transforming LandWarNet from NETCOM's perspective. "What we must be able to accomplish is information superiority, getting a warfighter the information he or she must have to make a decision at a critical point on the battlefield and to be able to do this in an environment we've never had to fight in before,"

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she said. "How do we now fight and prevail in this environment to provide

the right information to the warfighters? If you look at the global transformation of where NETCOM is today, the strategic communications message we have to deliver is that your information is absolutely critical and you have to protect and defend it just like you would a weapon

system on the battlefield."

"When a Soldier loses an M-16, the warfighter knows what to do about it: lock down, search for it, and the Soldier will never do it again,"

Lawrence continued. "What do we do with a Soldier who took sensitive information and released it on the NIPRNET [Non-Secure Internet Protocol Router Network] of where every one of our dining facilities are located in Iraq? Which one could cause more harm or danger to our Soldiers out in the field? That is how we have to start thinking about our information and how we're going to defend it."

Lawrence emphasized that currently, there is no single identity for warfighters. "You can't fight until the network finally catches up with you,

where you get your battle command information, and then you've got to be able to figure out where you were, what you missed in a fight, and get caught up," she said. "Every single Soldier must touch the network. As you look at FCS [Future Combat Systems], and you look at what brings the precision engagement, the unmanned sensors, and the common platforms together, it is the network."

The transformed network is going to move forward in 2009, and it will be flexible, plug-and-play, and will have the capability to reconfigure on the spot no matter what the mission is. "From the desktop to the foxhole and back again," Lawrence said. "And we're going to do it from home station training and move it to the full spectrum of operations

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so we have seamless battle command. Our warfighters need this today. ... As one force, we can be the country's professionals in delivering the single IT [information technology] service provider

so we can deliver these capabilities to our warfighters on the battlefield. We're excited about it; it's going to happen and it's a great time to be in NETCOM."

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LTG Jeffrey A. Sorenson, the Army's CIO/G-6, interacts with the audience during the panel discussion "Transforming LandWarNet for the Warfighter" at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition Oct. 6, 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Jacqueline M. Hames.)